

**AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

**Who's  
Really  
Benefiting?**

**Part**

**2**

**PUBLIC HIGHER  
EDUCATION**

Prepared by  
**The Washington State  
Commission on  
African American Affairs**

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## About this Report

### Answering two of the key questions surrounding Affirmative Action

Do blacks gain unfair advantage over whites as a result of state affirmative action efforts?  
Do affirmative action programs foster "reverse discrimination" against whites seeking employment, educational opportunities, and contracting opportunities?

This report is the second in a three-part series designed to provide preliminary answers to these questions as they relate to Washington state government. This document addresses employment and student enrollment at public four-year institutions of higher learning. This report does not address community and technical colleges or state agencies. State agencies were addressed in Part 1. Some key data of interest to the Commission were not readily available for community and technical colleges. Part 3 will present findings on state contracting in coming months.

### Recap of Findings from Part 1

*Affirmative Action: Who's Really Benefiting/Part 1* presented data provided by the Washington State Department of Personnel. These data showed that:

- Whites are the primary beneficiaries of the state's affirmative action program affecting hiring — this includes large numbers of white men as well as white women;
- While people of color certainly have benefited from state affirmative action efforts, Part 1 showed that benefits to people of color are outstripped by those received by whites;
- In fact, many people of color who are hired into state employment appear to be generally unaffected by affirmative action practices, although they may be helped by broader recruitment outreach.

### About Part 3

*Affirmative Action: Who's Really Benefiting/Part 3* will examine contracting in state government. Survey instruments have already been completed by dozens of state agencies. These surveys have collected information about how agencies conduct their contracting activities. Part 3 will present the results of the surveys and other findings.

## **Part 2/Findings and Recommendations**

### **Student Undergraduate Enrollment at Four-Year Institutions**

#### **Findings:**

Data provided by four-year institutions and compiled by the Washington State Office of Financial Management show that *whites* are key beneficiaries of “alternative admissions” standards at four-year schools — this includes significant numbers of white men as well as white women.

These alternative admissions standards allow admission of students whose combined indices of grades and standardized test scores do not meet regular admissions standards as defined by Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) policy and by the individual institutions. While the aggregated enrollment data show that whites are key beneficiaries of alternative admissions, it should be noted that alternative admissions activity at the University of Washington involves primarily people of color.

Although whites are the most numerous beneficiaries of alternative admissions, students of color also benefit greatly since, as groups, they all have higher rates of alternative admissions than whites. In other words, when students of color are considered, a larger proportion of them are admitted under alternative standards than is the case for whites.

#### **Recommendations:**

- The Commission recommends that the Higher Education Coordinating Board review its statewide policy on alternative admissions. This review should revisit the intent of the policy and its intended outcomes in terms of student enrollment by race, gender and ethnicity.
- Furthermore, the efficacy of the existing policy should be evaluated in terms of how the policy is applied by all of the four-year schools. The Commission would encourage the HECB to consider new alternative admission strategies, including some of those strategies which were originally proposed by HECB members during the 1988 debate on this issue.
- The Commission also would encourage the HECB to evaluate the possible outcomes — by race, gender and ethnicity — of a state alternative admissions standard which is indexed to the regular admissions cutoffs independently employed by the four-year institutions.
- The Commission recommends that all four-year schools be required by the HECB to report annually on all alternative admissions of incoming freshmen, including those for veterans, people with disabilities, athletes, artists, and children of alumni. This information should be reported in the OFM Higher Education Enrollment Report (HEER).

- The Commission further recommends that the four-year schools report to the HECB and/or the Office of Financial Management annually on recipients of tuition waivers.
- Data reported on alternative admissions, admissions preferences of other kinds, and tuition waivers should be disaggregated by race, gender, and ethnicity – and data should be provided on whites, as well as people of color.

## **Classified, Professional, and Faculty Employment**

### **Findings:**

Various data were provided by the University of Washington (UW), Washington State University (WSU), Western Washington University (WWU), Central Washington University (CWU), Eastern Washington University (EWU), The Evergreen State College (TESC), and the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB). Considered in aggregate, the limited data on supplemental certification show that *whites* are key beneficiaries of the four-year schools' affirmative action efforts affecting hiring in classified job groups.

Data compiled for 1994 also show that, despite affirmative action efforts, whites are being hired into most job groups at higher rates than African Americans. In the faculty job group, the data indicates that African Americans were hired at higher rates than whites. However, in three of the five instances where this occurred, only one African American hire comprised the entire pool of hires used to calculate the hire rate. In 1994, a total of 10 black faculty were hired at the five schools for which applicant flow data was available (all four-year schools except The Evergreen State College).

### **Recommendations:**

- The Commission recommends that the Department of Personnel conduct an independent review and analysis of all applicant flow data submitted by the four-year schools in the annual affirmative action plan documents.
- The Commission recommends that DOP establish further standards for affirmative action reporting to ensure that the narrative discussions, as well as the data, are reasonably standardized to allow easy comparisons and tracking of progress toward stated goals.
- The Commission recommends that, where evidence of adverse impact is indicated, that DOP annually publish a summary of the progress the four-year schools are making relative to their published affirmative action goals. Information on adverse impact also should be publicly reported, allowing job applicants to be fully informed about the final outcomes of hiring processes of which they were part.
- The Commission recommends that additional staff support be provided to the Governor's Affirmative Action Policy Committee – statistical staff support, in particular. This would allow GAAPCom to develop its own independent analyses of institutional data, rather than relying on the institutional analysis as their basis for making recommendations.

While this report highlights these and other findings, the Commission on African American Affairs does not intend to imply that white beneficiaries of affirmative action activities are undeserving or that the four-year institutions are remiss in terms of affirmative action efforts. Our only intent is to introduce facts and current information to what has been, until now, an emotionally-driven discussion of affirmative action issues.

## **Analysis**

### **Reality versus Perception**

Our findings clearly show that a broad schism exists between the public's perceptions of affirmative action and the reality of affirmative action as practiced in both hiring and student enrollment at public four-year schools. In terms of public perception among many white Americans, and even some blacks, affirmative action has become synonymous with preferential treatment for blacks.<sup>1</sup> Yet, the data show that many whites, women, Asians, Hispanics, and people of other races also are benefiting from affirmative action programs and alternative admissions standards.

Until now, an exchange of anecdotes has dominated the debate on affirmative action programs in higher education. The presentation of this report's limited findings of fact should cast a new light on the subject. If further study proves these findings to be accurate and representative of other jurisdictions (and even private institutions), then the discussion of preferential treatment must be refocused accordingly.

If specific affirmative action programs are malfunctioning in any way, only thoughtful review of the factual specifics surrounding those programs can lead to worthy solutions. We are not calling for exhaustive, time consuming studies. We are calling for a thorough review of the facts to include comprehensive data collection and a complete statistical analysis. Only such a review can accurately capture current trends and help policy makers anticipate the likely effects of current and new policies. This is especially true in the area of employment at the four-year schools.

### **Advancing the Public Policy Debate on Affirmative Action**

It may indeed be time to reform misdirected affirmative action efforts. New remedies may be needed to redress ongoing discrimination in education, employment, and contracting – discrimination which scholars blame for the earnings gap between white males and all other groups in society. Verifying the effects of discrimination is a critical task which must be undertaken to assess the real needs of all groups with "protected status" in Washington state.

Likewise, state government would be well served by a thorough review of the effectiveness of its affirmative action programs and a reevaluation of their purpose. Without such a review, our political leaders may be forced to rely on hearsay, anecdotes, and innuendo as the basis for developing policy on this important issue.

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<sup>1</sup> Burstein, Paul (1992) "Affirmative Action, Jobs, and American Democracy: What Has Happened to the Quest for Equal Opportunity?" 26 Law & Society Review 901.

## **Understanding Admissions Policies at Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities**

In April 1988, the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) approved minimum standards for freshman admissions to public baccalaureate institutions. These standards, which were phased in by Fall 1992, apply to **regular and alternative admissions** of nearly all freshmen. The primary criterion for admission is an indexed combination of high school grade point average, standardized test scores, and high school course completion.

### **Regular Undergraduate Admissions Standards under HECB Policy**

Regular admissions standards for the University of Washington (UW) and Washington State University (WSU) require, at a minimum, index scores indicating that an applicant has an 80 percent probability of achieving a "C" average or better during their freshman year. For UW and WSU, this equates to an index score of 28 on the scale that is used. Applicants also must verify completion of certain high school courses.

Standards for Central Washington University (CWU), Eastern Washington University (EWU), Western Washington University (WWU) and The Evergreen State College (TESC) require index scores indicating a 65 percent probability of achieving a "C" average or better. For these four schools, this equates to an index score of 13 on the same scale. Applicants also must verify completion of certain high school courses.

In other words, state standards require regularly admitted students at UW and WSU to present index scores of 28 or higher, along with the appropriate completed course work. State standards require regularly admitted students at CWU, EWU, WWU, and TESC to present index scores of 13 or higher – a significant variance.

### **Regular Undergraduate Admissions Standards under Institutional Policy**

Competition for admission to the four-year schools has become more intense than was the case in 1988 when the HECB policy was approved. Consequently, admissions index scores set in the HECB policy may not be relevant to some of the institutions, where regular admissions standards are significantly higher.

In other words, some of the institutions routinely establish more rigorous minimum standards for regular admissions than those set by HECB. For example, the effective regular admissions index score at the UW was 50 for 1994 admissions, not 28 as described in the HECB policy. Students whose index scores fell between 28 and 49 did not meet the institution's regular admissions standards for 1994. While these students met regular admissions standards for the UW as set by the state, they fell below the standards set by the school.

### **Alternative Undergraduate Admissions Standards under HECB Policy**

HECB policy also set parameters for an alternative standard for admissions which “focuses on the admission of first-time students attending public universities at the freshman level.” These standards do not specify minimum index scores or standardized test scores below which applicants will not be admitted (as is the case with regular admissions), but a 2.0 high school grade point average is required and standardized test scores must be submitted. Alternative standards exist for graduate and professional school admissions, but they are not examined in this report.

HECB policy limits the percentage of admissions that can be made under the alternative admissions standard. The policy states that *“no more than 15 percent of the freshmen enrolled at each of the six public baccalaureate institutions may be admitted using the alternative standard. Any potential reduction or expansion of this limit will be considered by the Board on an institution-by institution-basis. The Boards’ review of the need to make increases or decreases in the 15 percent limit will include an analysis of institutional utilization of the alternative standard as well as the progress made by the institution in attracting and retaining members of underrepresented minority groups.”*

### **Overview of Institutional Undergraduate Admissions Policies**

The following statements provide a snapshot of admissions policies – regular and alternative – for each of the four-year schools. The policies described applied to students admitted in Fall 1994.

#### **The University of Washington**

*Regular Admissions for 1994* – Washington resident applicants with admissions index of 50 or above are classified as regular admits, provided they have completed the necessary “core course” requirements. The cutoff index score is higher for out-of-state applicants.

*Alternative Admissions for 1994* – Generally speaking, UW alternative admissions include freshmen enrolled in college for the first time (up to 45 quarter hours of transfer credit allowed) who have index scores below 40. Running start applicants with fewer than 45 quarter-hours of transfer credit are included in this category. Washington resident applicants with admission index of 50 or above are classed as regular admits. Sixty-five percent of residents in the range of 40-49 were admitted as regular based on supplemental academic factors. The cutoff is higher for out-of-state applicants. Some alternative admits have an admission index greater than the operational cutoff, but do not meet core course requirements for regular admission.

#### **Washington State University**

*Regular Admissions for 1994* – All applicants with an admissions index of 28 or above are classified as regular admits, except when they have not completed the necessary “core course” requirements.



### **Washington State University *continued***

*Alternative Admissions for 1994* – Students who fail to meet WSU's published admissions standards will receive a letter requesting additional information which would explain any extenuating circumstances that may have affected their academic performance. Faculty review the additional information and admit students under alternative admissions criteria. Students who are denied admission after the faculty review may appeal to an admissions subcommittee.

### **Western Washington University**

*Regular Admissions 1994* – Applicants with index scores of 13 or above are classified as regular admits.

*Alternative Admissions 1994* – Students with index scores of 13, but who lack core course requirements, are classified as alternative admits.

### **Eastern Washington University**

*Regular Admissions 1994* – Applicants with index scores of 13 or above are classified as regular admits. Students who meet minimum state standards are admitted.

*Alternative Admissions 1994* – Students with index scores of 13, but who lack core course requirements, are classified as alternative admits. A special admissions committee reviews the qualifications of students who do not meet minimum standards. The committee considers various criteria, including standardized test scores, ethnicity, special circumstances, educational attainment of applicant's family members, and other factors. Students who are denied admission may appeal the committee decision.

### **Central Washington University**

*Regular Admissions 1994* – All applicants with index scores of 19 or above are classified as regular admits. This standard is slightly higher than the applicable HECB standard which requires an index score of 13 or more.

*Alternative Admissions 1994* – Students who do not gain regular admission at this level may still be considered under the "Access" alternative admissions program. Consideration is given to students who are low income, "ethnic minorities," and/or students whose parents did not attend college. Students accepted under "Access" must meet regularly with advisors and adhere to proscribed class schedules.

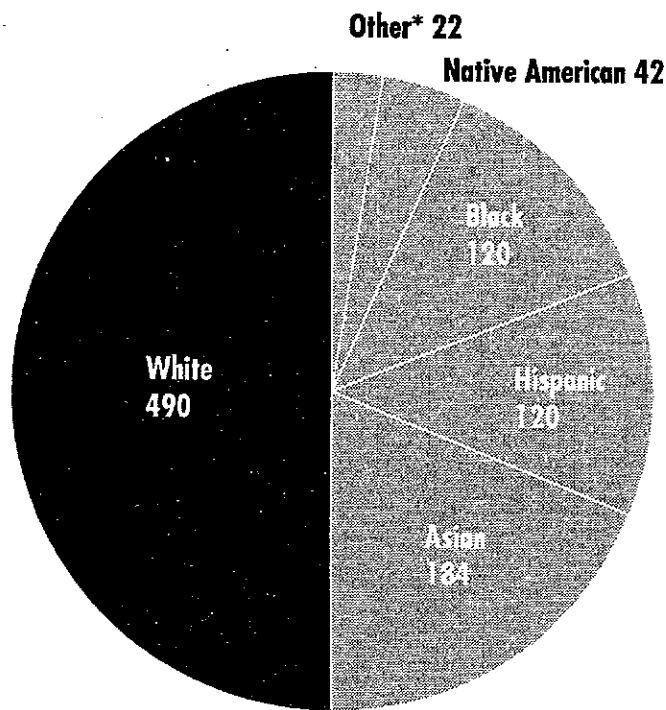
### **The Evergreen State College**

*Regular and Alternative Admissions 1994* – Applicants with index scores of 13 or above are classified as regular admits. Students with index scores of 13, but who lack core course requirements, are classified as alternative admits. Because Evergreen seeks to achieve a diverse student body, special recognition will be given to applicants who are black, Native American, Asian, Hispanic, "physically challenged," Vietnam veterans, adults age 25 and older, and students whose parents are not college graduates.

## **Statewide Totals – Enrolled New Freshman Admitted under Alternative Admissions Standards**

**Fall 1994 Alternative Enrollment/**  
Includes admissions under statewide HECB policy and  
admissions under varying criteria established by each school

**978 Total**



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For 1994, the following can be observed:

- Statewide, for every one African American admitted under alternative admissions, four whites were admitted.
- At WSU, for every one African American admitted under alternative admissions, 11 whites were admitted.
- At WWU, for every one African American admitted under alternative admissions, 18 whites were admitted.
- Whites represent slightly more than one-half of all students enrolled under alternative admissions statewide.
- In 1994, whites at Washington State University represented 28.5 percent of all students enrolled under alternative admissions statewide.

\* "Other" represents other race and unknown race

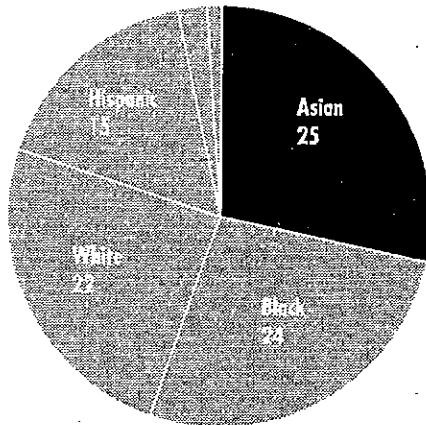
## Alternative Admissions to Public 4-Year Colleges and Universities

### University of Washington Alternative Admissions

Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
**HECB Alternative Admissions Standard:**  
Index Scores Less than 28

**89 Total**

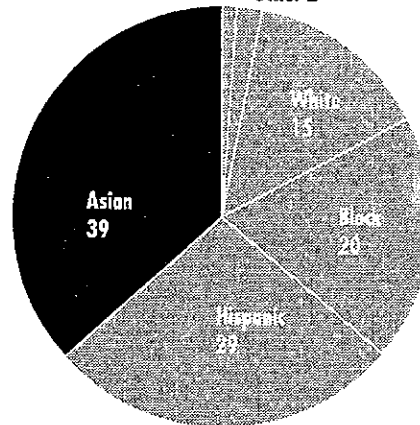
Native American 2 Other 1



Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
**UW Alternative Admissions Standard:**  
Index Scores of 28 to 39

**106 Total**

Native American 1 Other 2

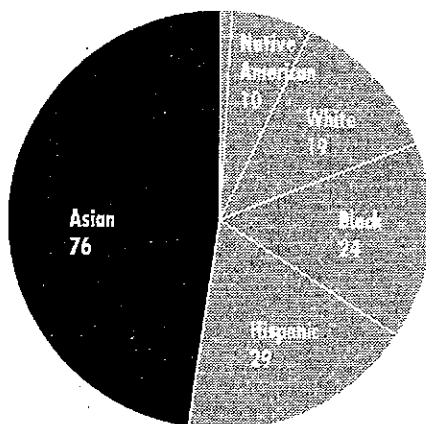


Data do not include transfer students

Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
**UW Alternative Admissions/Other\***

**159 Total**

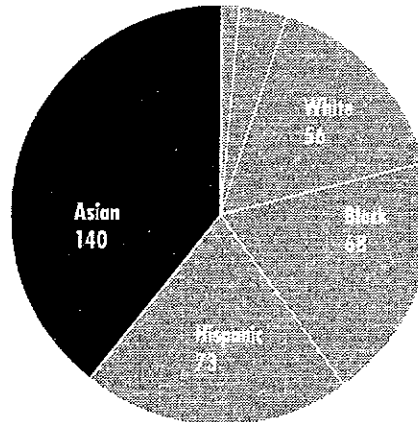
Other 1



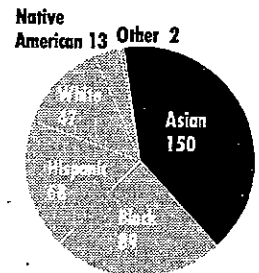
Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
**UW Alternative Admissions/ Total**

**354 Grand Total**

Other 4 Native American 13



Fall 1993 First-Time  
Freshmen Enrolled under  
**UW Alternative Admissions/Total**  
**369 Grand Total**



Note: UW data includes freshmen enrolled in college for the first time; up to 45 quarter hours of transfer credit allowed. Running start applicants with fewer than 45 quarter-hours of transfer credit are included in this category. Washington resident applicants with admission index of 50 or above are classed as regular admits. Sixty-five percent of residents in the range of 40-49 were admitted as regular based on supplemental academic factors. The cutoff is higher for out-of-state applicants. "Other" alternative admits have an admissions index of 40 or above, but may not meet core course requirements for regular admissions and/or may not meet the higher admissions index criteria required for non-resident applicants.

\* Includes non-resident applicants with admissions index less than 79 and core-deficient applicants.

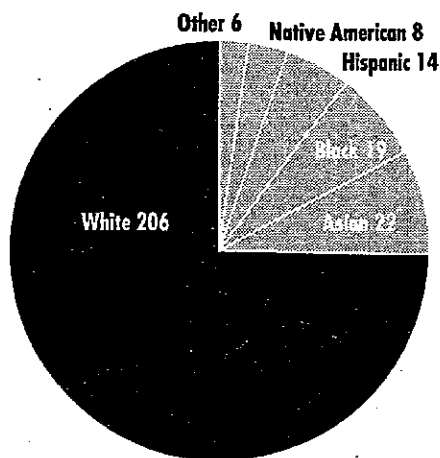
Source: Data provided by institutions and reported by the Office of Financial Management

## Alternative Admissions to Public 4-Year Colleges and Universities

### Washington State University Alternative Admissions

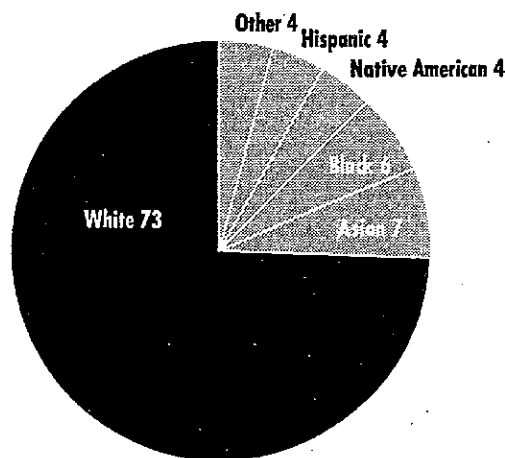
Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
HECB Alternative Admissions Standard:  
Index Scores Less than 28

**275 Total**



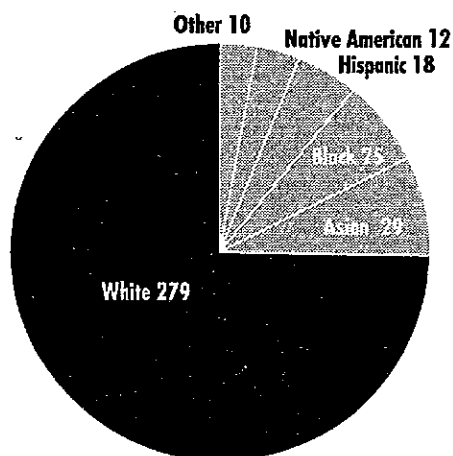
Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
WSU Alternative Admissions Standard:  
Index Score 28 or above with core course deficiencies

**98 Total**



Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
WSU Alternative Admissions/Total

**373 Grand Total**



**Washington State University  
did not provide alternative  
admissions totals for 1993**

Note: WSU data include freshmen enrolled in college for the first time; with less than 27 semester-hours of transfer credits with the exception of Running Start applicants, all of whom are classified as first-time freshmen. All applicants with admission index of 28 or above are classed as regular admits except when there are core curriculum deficiencies.

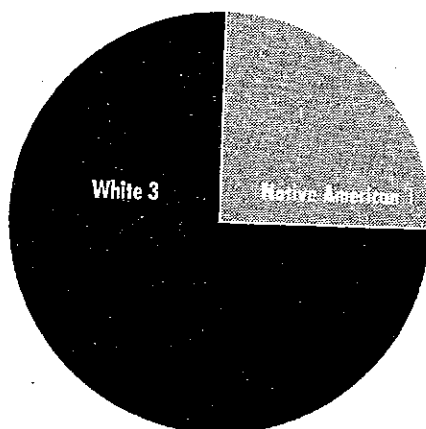
Source: Data provided by institutions and reported by the Office of Financial Management

## Alternative Admissions to Public 4-Year Colleges and Universities

### Western Washington University Alternative Admissions

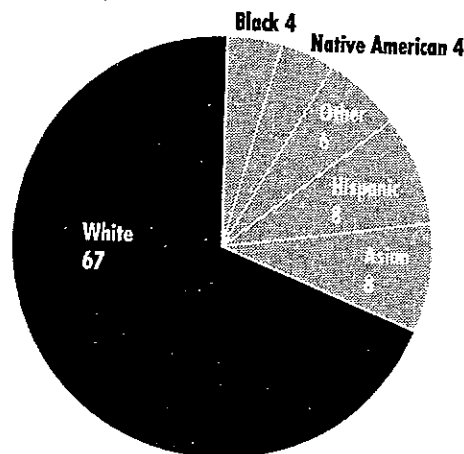
Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
HECB Alternative Admissions Standard:  
Index Scores Less than 13

**4 Total**



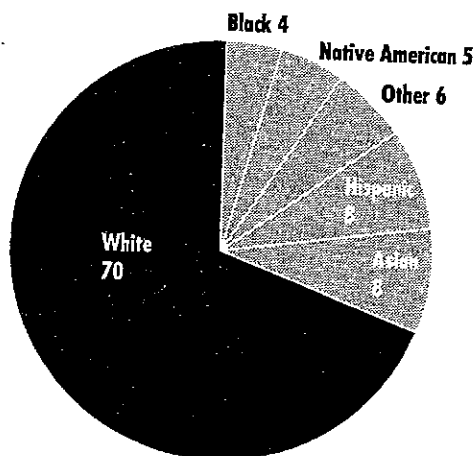
Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
WWU Alternative Admissions Standard:  
Index Scores of 13 or above with core course deficiencies

**97 Total**



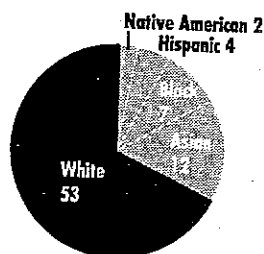
Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
WWU Alternative Admissions/Total

**101 Grand Total**



Fall 1993 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
WWU Alternative Admissions/Total

**78 Grand Total**



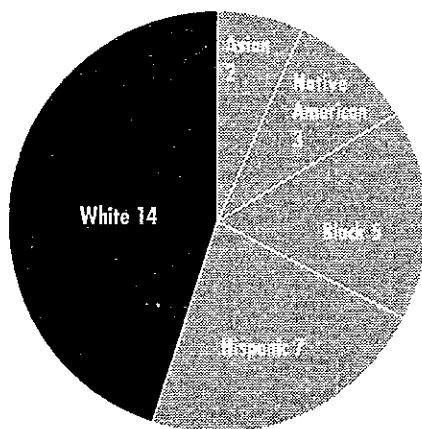
Note: WWU data include freshmen enrolled in college for the first time, regardless of the number of transfer credits. All Running Start applicants are included. Applicants with admission index of 13 or above are classified as regular admits. Some alternative admits have an index greater than 13, but do not meet core course requirements for regular admission or do not have high school gpa of 2.5 or greater.

Source: Data provided by institutions and reported by the Office of Financial Management

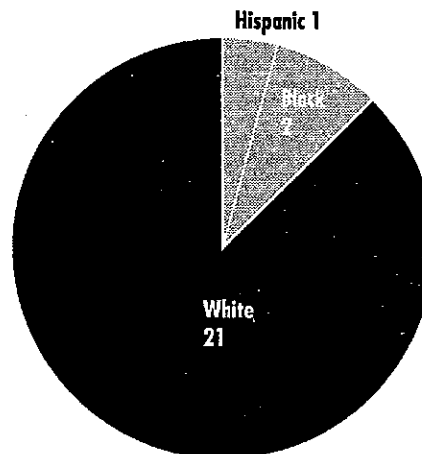
## Alternative Admissions to Public 4-Year Colleges and Universities

### Central Washington University Alternative Admissions

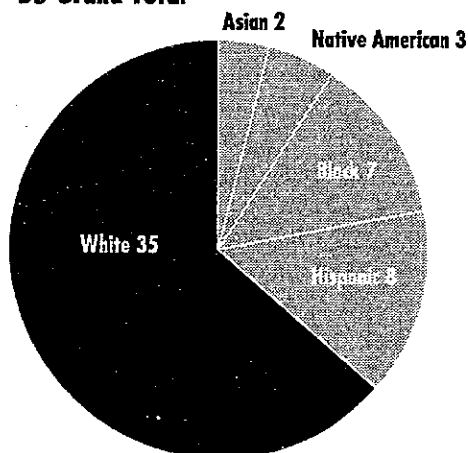
Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
HECB Alternative Admissions Standard:  
Index Scores Less than 13  
**31 Total**



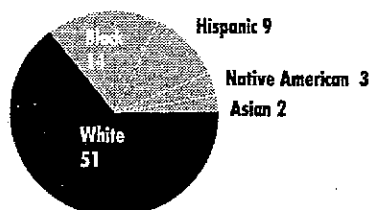
Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
CWU Alternative Admissions Standard:  
Index Scores of 13 to 18  
**24 Total**



Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
CWU Alternative Admissions/Total  
**55 Grand Total**



Fall 1993 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
CWU Alternative Admissions/Total  
**79 Grand Total**



Note: CWU data include freshmen enrolled in college for the first time; no transfer credits with the exception of Running Start applicants, all of whom are classified as first-time freshmen. All applicants with admission index of 19 or above are classified as regular admits. Applicants admitted as alternative admits have admission index of 18 or less. Some are with core deficiencies.

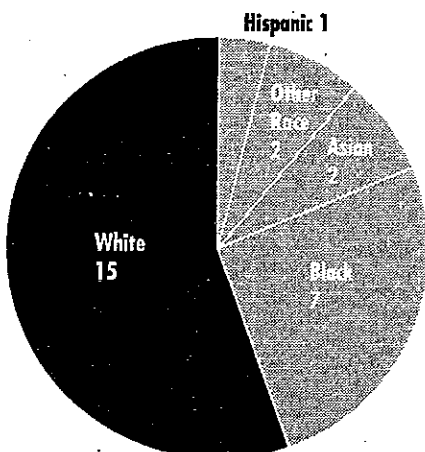
Source: Data provided by institutions and reported by the Office of Financial Management

## Alternative Admissions to Public 4-Year Colleges and Universities

### Eastern Washington University Alternative Admissions

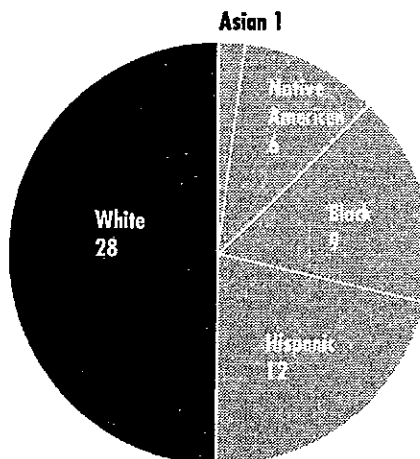
Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
HECB Alternative Admissions Standard:  
Index Scores Less than 13

**27 Total**



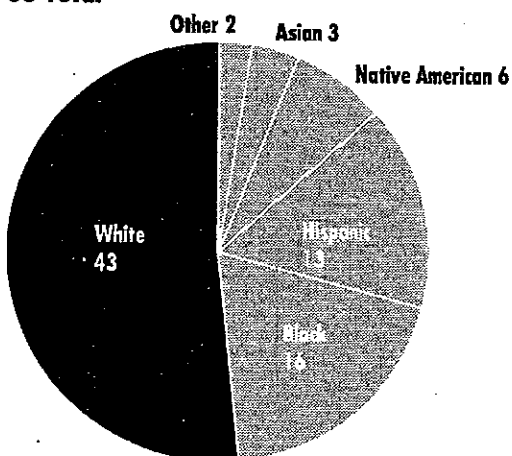
Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
EWU Alternative Admissions Standard:  
Index Scores of 13 or above with core course deficiencies

**56 Total**

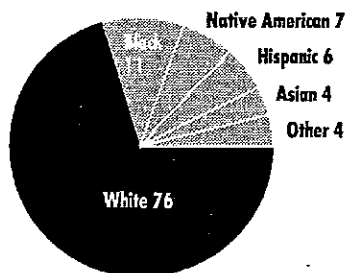


Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
EWU Alternative Admissions/Total

**83 Total**



Fall 1993 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
EWU Alternative Admissions/Total  
**108 Grand Total**



Note: EWU data include freshmen enrolled for the first time with no transfer credits. All Running Start applicants are included. Applicants with admission index of 13 or above are classified as regular admits. Some alternative admits have an admission index greater than 13, but do not meet core course requirements for regular admission.

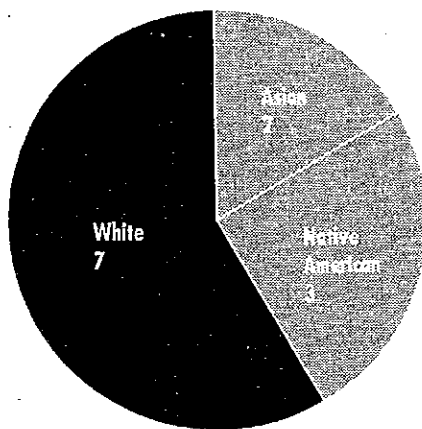
Source: Data provided by institutions and reported by the Office of Financial Management

## Alternative Admissions to Public 4-Year Colleges and Universities

### The Evergreen State College Alternative Admissions

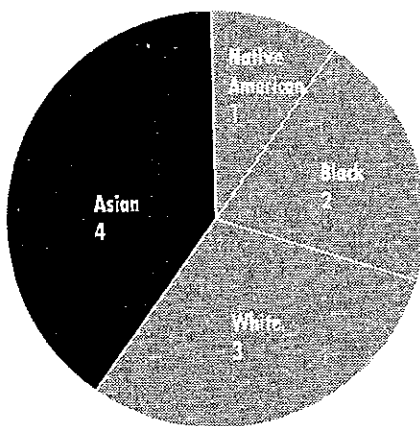
Fall 1994 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
HECB Alternative Admission Standard  
Index Scores below 13

**12 Total**



Fall 1993 First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under  
HECB Alternative Admission Standard  
Index Scores below 13 and Above 13 with core course deficiencies

**10 Total**



Note: TESC data include freshmen enrolled in college for the first time with fewer than 40 quarter-hours of transfer credits.  
Running Start applicants with fewer than 40 quarter-hours of transfer credits are included.  
Applicants with admission index of 13 or above are classed as regular admits.

Source: Data provided by institutions and reported by the Office of Financial Management



## Is Alternative Admission an Affirmative Action Tool?

Before alternative admission standards can be assessed, the original intent of the standards must be understood. The intent of the standards is fodder for disagreement. Some observers would argue that the standards are not related to affirmative action, but were designed to allow individual institutions to diversify their student bodies and enrich the educational environment. On the other hand, the Washington State Commission on African American Affairs believes that the HECB alternative admissions standards were originally conceived as an affirmative action tool. The Commission also believes that without the impetus on increasing enrollment of students of color, alternative standards probably would not have been enacted at the 15 percent level, if they'd been enacted at all.

On these grounds, the Commission finds that it is entirely reasonable to view alternative admissions as an affirmative action tool. The Commission does not take this view arbitrarily. We cite as our references the transcript of one debate on the subject of alternative admissions and other documentation provided by the HECB. Unfortunately, the Commission requested additional documentation which the HECB could not locate, including staff research memoranda on the subject of alternative admissions, legal research on that subject, and other HECB meeting transcripts.

### The HECB Debate on Alternative Admissions

When the HECB discussed alternative admission standards on February 17, 1988, HECB chairman Chuck Collins expressed concerns about capping the proposed alternative standard to only 15 percent of affected admissions. He also noted that, at that time, the University of Washington's recruitment of students of color far exceeded efforts at the other four-year schools. Collins' stated two key concerns: 1) capping alternative admissions would cap affirmative action recruitment and 2) a race-neutral alternative admissions policy would go beyond affirmative action, and at a 15 percent level, would allow in large numbers of students who were not the primary focus of the policy in his view.

#### *HECB chair, Chuck Collins*

... And by setting a ceiling, if you will, whether that's appropriate for the affirmative action program, we've created a whole category of admissions possibilities at the other schools (other than UW) that have nothing to do with affirmative action. And the vast majority of cases will have no relation to affirmative action. If we're saying that the affirmative action is going to be the driver -- which I think it should be -- I don't care what the percentage ... The effect is though that we are creating the policy aura that we are capping affirmative action activities ... and that is we create increasing categories of special admits at the other schools (other than UW) that have nothing to do with affirmative action."



Collins' comments indicate that the original, ostensible purpose of the policy was to encourage increased minority enrollment. After his statement above, various board members proposed strategies for crafting an alternative admissions standard that would not limit affirmative action efforts. HECB director Bob Theony also addressed Collins' concerns about creating a new category of alternative admissions for people who are not people of color:

*HECB director, Bob Theony*

"... we certainly want to have greater affirmative action efforts at each of our institutions. So I would hope that those percentages will increase, and not only rely on the UW to be the institution to admit minorities. Secondly, though I understand your concern that there are non-minority people who will be entering, we have had testimony that there are educationally disadvantaged people who are not minority people. If you depart from having a broad standard of educationally disadvantaged, I think you're inviting a lawsuit if you try to have one standard for minorities and one standard for non-minorities."

Another board member, Bill Wiley, interjects in support of continuing the emphasis on affirmative action, but also in support of measured assistance to other groups:

*HECB member, Bill Wiley*

"I don't see a difference in standards. I see the difference in percentages, not standards. The standard for the acceptance of special admits can be the same. But you are going to limit special admits who do not fall into the affirmative action category. So I would make statement of this sort: 'A 10 percent special admit exclusive of affirmative action programs.' What's wrong with that?"

As the banter continued, Collins proposed eliminating any percentage limits on affirmative action enrollments while establishing a general alternative admissions category capped at five percent:

*HECB chair, Chuck Collins*

"My proposal is to eliminate any percentage reference to affirmative action special admits, which I think disposes nicely of the question of quotas. I don't feel very comfortable sitting here playing lawyer. If we've got another category of non-affirmative action special admits that is as large as 10-15 percent, I think we have to look at the probability (regular admissions) standard.

"I think we should have a very, very small category of exceptions to our rule (regular admissions). And I'm thinking of something like five percent."

The discussion continued. Theony repeatedly raised the specter of legal challenges to any standard that specifically addressed the issue of separate standards for minority admissions. At one point, Collins proposed allowing alternative admissions for any



purpose and capping that group at five percent, but not including affirmative action under that lid. This again drew calls for legal advice from Theony, at which point Collins said, "But that's what affirmative action and protected groups is about," again indicating his view that the impetus of the policy was affirmative action.

As this part of the discussion drew to a close, another member Andy Hess proposes that the group agree upon a broad, race-neutral alternative admissions policy with a 20 percent cap. Hess says such a policy "... shows a direction without endangering or creating an emotional reaction while we continue to learn more about it."

At this point Collins makes the following broken, but prophetic statement in response to Hess's proposal for a race-neutral alternative admissions policy with a 20 percent cap:

*HECB chair, Chuck Collins*

"Andy, in my opinion you've just gutted (sic) the vast majority of those special admits that the schools outside the UW are going to be for reasons other than affirmative action. That just -- I mean just lift the barn door --. If we have 20 percent exceptions to our standard we've got to change the standard."

### **Conclusion:**

These excerpts indicate to the Commission on African American Affairs that the original intent of the policy was as an affirmative action tool to increase minority enrollment, particularly at the four-year schools OTHER THAN the UW. In the end, the HECB approved the race-neutral language of the policy presented earlier, along with a 15 percent lid on alternative admissions.

Furthermore, the Commission finds that board member Collins' fears about the race-neutral language of the final policy were well founded. As he predicted, the majority of special admissions outside the UW do not involve students of color.

As was the case in 1988, the UW continues to have the largest number of minority students enrolled under alternative admissions. Minority students at the UW are admitted in what appears to be a more academically competitive environment than that which exists at the other four-year schools. In fact, 161 minority students classified as "special admits" at UW had admissions index scores of 28 or higher, compared to 206 white students classified as "special admits" at WSU who had admissions index scores under 28. In this instance, the 206 whites at WSU are being admitted under the state standard, while the UW students were meeting a higher, institution-specific special admissions standard.

## First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under Regular and Alternative Admissions Standards

Numbers of each ethnic/racial group enrolled under alternative admissions standards

Source: Institutional data from each school as reported by the Washington State Office of Financial Management

### University of Washington

1994	Regular Admits Enrolled	Altern. Admits Index < 28	Altern. Admits Index 28-39	Other* Altern. Admits	Altern Admits Total	Total Admits UW	% Altern. Admits UW
White	2,157	22	15	19	56	2,213	2.5%
Asian	665	25	39	76	140	805	17.4%
Black	25	24	20	24	68	93	73.1%
Hispanic	53	15	29	29	73	126	57.9%
Native Am.	20	2	1	10	13	33	39.4%
Other	215	1	2	1	4	219	1.8%
Total	3,135	89	106	159	354	3,489	10.1%

*Note: UW data includes freshmen enrolled in college for the first time; up to 45 quarter hours of transfer credit allowed. Running start applicants with fewer than 45 quarter-hours of transfer credit are included in this category. Washington resident applicants with admission index of 50 or above are classed as regular admits. Sixty-five percent of residents in the range of 40-49 were admitted as regular based on supplemental academic factors. The cutoff is higher for out-of-state applicants. "Other" alternative admits have an admissions index of 40 or above, but may not meet core course requirements for regular admissions and/or may not meet the higher admissions index criteria required for non-resident applicants.*

*\* Includes non-resident applicants with admissions index less than 79 and core-deficient applicants.*

### Washington State University

1994	Regular Admits Enrolled	Altern. Admits Index < 28	Altern. Admits Other	Altern Admits Total	Total Admits WSU	% Altern. Admits WSU
White	1,731	206	73	279	2,010	13.9%
Black	35	19	6	25	60	41.7%
Hispanic	72	14	4	18	90	20.0%
Asian	110	22	7	29	139	20.9%
Native Am.	36	8	4	12	48	25.0%
Other	124	6	4	10	134	7.5%
Total	2,108	275	98	373	2,481	15.0%

*Note: WSU data include freshmen enrolled in college for the first time; with less than 27 semester-hours of transfer credits with the exception of Running Start applicants, all of whom are classified as first-time freshmen. All applicants with admissions index of 28 or above who meet core course requirements are classified as regular admits. "Other" alternative admits are those with admissions index of 28 or above who do not meet core course requirements.*

*Note for all tables: The "Other" race category includes persons not identifying themselves as any of the specific categories included in the table (Black, Asian, Native American, Hispanic, White) as well as persons for whom race information is not reported.*

## First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under Regular and Alternative Admissions Standards

Numbers of each ethnic/racial group enrolled under alternative admissions standards

Source: Institutional data from each school as reported by the Washington State Office of Financial Management

### Central Washington University

1994	Regular Admits Enrolled	Altern. Admits Index < 13	Altern. Admits Index 13-18	Altern Admits Total	Total Admits CWU	% Altern. Admits CWU
White	870	14	21	35	905	3.9%
Black	14	5	2	7	21	33.3%
Hispanic	24	7	1	8	32	25.0%
Asian	34	2	0	2	36	5.6%
Native Am.	16	3	0	3	19	15.8%
Other	5	0	0	0	5	0
Total	963	31	24	55	1,018	5.4%

*Note: CWU data include freshmen enrolled in college for the first time; no transfer credits with the exception of Running Start applicants, all of whom are classified as first-time freshmen. All applicants with admission index of 19 or above are classified as regular admits. Applicants admitted as alternative admits have admission index of 18 or less. Some are with core deficiencies.*

### Western Washington University

1994	Regular Admits Enrolled	Altern. Admits Index < 13	Altern. Admits Other	Altern Admits Total	Total Admits WWU	% Altern. Admits WWU
White	1,054	3	67	70	1,124	6.2%
Black	29	0	4	4	33	12.1%
Hispanic	41	0	8	8	49	16.3%
Asian	157	0	8	8	165	4.8%
Native Am.	23	1	4	5	28	17.9%
Other	90	0	6	6	96	6.3%
Total	1,394	4	97	101	1,495	6.8%

*Note: WWU data include freshmen enrolled in college for the first time, regardless of the number of transfer credits. All Running Start applicants are included. Applicants with admissions index of 13 or above are classified as regular admits if they meet core course requirements. Applicants with acceptable admissions index (13 or above) are counted as "Other" alternative admits, if they do not meet core course requirements.*

*Note for all tables: The "Other" race category includes persons not identifying themselves as any of the specific categories included in the table (Black, Asian, Native American, Hispanic, White) as well as persons for whom race information is not reported.*

## First-Time Freshmen Enrolled under Regular and Alternative Admissions Standards

Numbers of each ethnic/racial group enrolled under alternative admissions standards

Source: Institutional data from each school as reported by the Washington State Office of Financial Management

### Eastern Washington University

1994	Regular Admits Enrolled	Altern. Admits Index < 13	Altern. Admits Other	Altern Admits Total	Total Admits EWU	% Altern. Admits EWU
White	577	15	28	43	620	6.9%
Black	9	7	9	16	25	64.0%
Hispanic	19	1	12	13	32	40.6%
Asian	17	2	1	3	20	15.0%
Native Am.	8	0	6	6	14	42.9%
Other	34	2	0	2	36	5.6%
Total	664	27	56	83	747	11.1%

*Note: EWU data include freshmen enrolled for the first time with no transfer credits. All Running Start applicants are included. Applicants with admission index of 13 or above are classified as regular admits. "Other" alternative admits have an admissions index of 13 or above, but do not meet core course requirements for regular admissions.*

### The Evergreen State College

1994	Regular Admits Enrolled	Altern. Admits	Total Admits TESC	% Altern. Admits TESC
White	335	7	342	2.0%
Black	8	0	8	0.0%
Hispanic	15	0	15	0.0%
Asian	24	2	26	7.7%
Native Am.	11	3	14	21.4%
Other	54	0	54	0.0%
Total	447	12	459	2.6%

*Note: TESC data include freshmen enrolled in college for the first time with fewer than 40 quarter-hours of transfer credits. Running Start applicants with fewer than 40 quarter-hours of transfer credits are included. Applicants with admission index of 13 or above are classed as regular admits.*

*Note for all tables: The "Other" race category includes persons not identifying themselves as any of the specific categories included in the table (Black, Asian, Native American, Hispanic, White) as well as persons for whom race information is not reported.*

## **Conclusions:**

### **Whites are the primary beneficiaries of alternative admissions standards**

Alternative admissions standards have long been derided by critics as a "lowering of standards" which diminishes academic excellence and limits opportunity for those who are "better qualified." To the degree that alternative admissions standards can be viewed as a "lowering of the bar," that bar is being jumped far more often by whites than by blacks in Washington's four year schools.

Admissions data provided by institutions and reported the Office of Financial Management show that whites are the primary beneficiaries of alternative admissions statewide with 490 whites enrolled under these standards versus 120 African Americans in 1994. Totals for 1993 are unavailable, since WSU did not provide data to OFM for 1993. The data supplied by the UW, CWU, WWU, EWU, and TESC suggests a distribution of alternative admissions for 1993 that was very similar to that for 1994.

With only one year of complete data readily available, it would be unrealistic to speculate whether data on alternative admissions in 1994 is indicative of future trends.

### **Students of color also benefit from alternative admissions standards**

Students of color certainly benefit from alternative admissions standards, but in smaller numbers and even smaller proportions. For example, for every black student admitted to WWU under alternative criteria in 1994, 17.5 white students were admitted. For every black student admitted under alternative criteria at WSU, 11.2 white students were admitted. Furthermore, students admitted under alternative standards at WSU represented a much larger share of that school's new undergraduates than was the case for any other institution, including UW.

Although whites are the most numerous beneficiaries of alternative admissions, students of color also benefit greatly since, as groups, they have higher rates of alternative admissions than whites. In other words, when students of color who are admitted under alternative policies are compared to the total enrollment for their ethnic/racial groups, a larger proportion of them are admitted under alternative standards than is the case for whites.

African Americans would stand to lose the most in a system without alternative admissions because, although their numbers are small compared to white participants, their reliance on alternative admissions opportunities is greater than any other ethnic/racial group.

# **Affirmative Action Planning at Washington's Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities**

## **Authority for affirmative action in hiring**

State law {RCW 41.06.020(11), 41.06.150(22), and 49.74} requires affirmative action be taken for Asians, Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans, women, people over the age of 40, people with disabilities, and disabled and Vietnam-era veterans. Such affirmative action shall apply in the areas of recruitment, appointment, promotion, transfer, training, and career development. It requires the development and implementation of goals and timetables and the establishment of a system for monitoring progress.

The Governor's Executive Order 93-03 reaffirmed the state's commitment to attaining equal opportunity for all citizens. In August 1993, the Department of Personnel reissued guidelines outlining the responsibilities of public institutions of higher education and related boards to ensure equal employment opportunity and affirmative action stating that "both approaches are essential to the well being of the State and its residents."

## **Institutional responsibilities related to affirmative action in hiring**

Institutions and related boards with 25 or more employees must submit an annual Affirmative Action Plan to the Higher Education Unit of the Department of Personnel for technical approval. After technical approval, the Plan is reviewed by the Governor's Affirmative Action Policy Committee (GAAPCom), a group created by Executive Order 93-03. GAAPCom reviews and approves affirmative action plans against implementation strategies and goals progress. GAAPCom also prepares an annual report outlining the state's progress in meeting its affirmative action goals. The most recent report discussing higher education issues was prepared May 6, 1994. It summarized workforce profile data for the year 1993 and compared it to data for an 11-year period from 1982 to 1993.

The Washington Personnel Resources Board (PRB) and the State Human Rights Commission (HRC) also have responsibilities related to affirmative action. Among other things, PRB reviews and updates minimum qualifications, class specifications, and examinations for classified staff at higher education institutions. HRC is charged with enforcement duties related to affirmative action.



State affirmative action guidelines for higher education institutions are designed to meet or exceed the requirements described in the *Regional Standard Affirmative Action Format* (RSAAF). The RSAAF ensures consistency between state and federal requirements and consistency from one higher education institution to another. All of the four-year institutions discussed in this document are parties to the RSAAF with the exception of The Evergreen State College. Four-year institutions are required by the Office of Federal Contracts and Compliance to develop annual affirmative action plans.

Under higher education guidelines, an affirmative action program is "a set of specific and results-oriented programs to which an institution commits itself, through good faith efforts, to achieve prompt and full utilization of protected groups where deficiencies exist." In this context, an acceptable affirmative action plan includes an analysis of areas where protected groups are underrepresented, sets forth goals to correct those deficiencies and, when implemented, achieves full utilization of protected groups in all levels and in all segments of the workforce.

### **Affirmative action guidelines in hiring at the institutions**

Each institution's affirmative action plan includes employment goals, data on goal attainment during the last year, descriptions of problem areas, and corrective action plans. As recruitment, hiring, transfers, and promotions occur throughout the year, information is compiled on how those activities are impacting affected group members relative to the employment goals set for them in the prior year's affirmative action plan. Ideally, hiring officials are aware of specific affirmative action goals for specific jobs and they are actively working to meet these goals. Employment in public higher education institutions falls into three broad categories: classified staff, exempt and administrative professional staff, and tenured and nontenured faculty (The Evergreen State College does not assign tenure to faculty).

There are basically four key objectives of affirmative action efforts in any job category:

- 1) Increase awareness of employment opportunities and equal opportunity policy among all staff, especially protected group members.
- 2) Enhance the opportunities for protected group members to progress through the employment process to the point of a final interview and to do so in proportions comparable to other groups.
- 3) Enhance the opportunities for protected group members to be hired into categories of employment where they are underutilized.
- 4) Enhance the opportunities for protected group members to advance in their respective careers along career paths and on timetables comparable to those for other groups.

The specific strategies used to accomplish these objectives vary by institution and job category.

## **Setting affirmative action goals and following through**

Each affirmative action plan includes these and other common elements:

- A) A designated official to develop and monitor affirmative action plans and communicate with internal and external stakeholders.
- B) Utilization analysis comparing the current workforce to a profile of the available workforce to reveal where protected groups are underrepresented.

The availability figures are established by each institution using a technique called Multi-Factor Analysis which considers various factors such as population size, numbers of civilians from each protected group in the labor force, availability of people with requisite skills, availability of relevant training, and other factors. These factors are weighted in importance by the institutions.

- C) Affirmative action employment goals and objectives – goals are based on utilization analyses and are established for the following groups: American Indians/Alaskan Natives, Asians/Pacific Islanders, Blacks, Hispanics, women, people with disabilities, people over age 40, veterans with disabilities, and Vietnam-era veterans. Reports on goals and objectives should include, at a minimum, an institution-wide report on goals for the prior year and goals for the current year. Goals will be significant, measurable, and attainable by good faith efforts. Goals are flexible targets for hiring and promoting members of affected groups where underutilization exists. They are not inflexible quotas, nor are they used to discriminate against any person. Each resulting goal applies only to the specific job category for which specific availability factors were compiled.
- D) Identification of problem areas to include in-depth analysis of problem areas which may include – among other things – the selection process, transfer and promotion practices, composition of the workforce by affected group status, composition of applicant flow, and workforce attitudes. The analyses determine whether:
  - underutilization of affected groups exists in specific job groups
  - lateral and/or vertical movements of affected employees are occurring at a lesser rate than for others.
  - selection processes are eliminating a significantly higher percentages of affected group members
  - referral ratios of affected groups to hiring official indicates that a higher percentage are being rejected as compared to other applicants.

- E) Corrective actions are implemented if any of a variety of conditions are found, including; underutilization of affected groups in specific job groups, selection processes that are eliminating a significantly higher percentage of affected groups, and other factors. Corrective actions can include reviewing recruitment and selection activities, conducting impact ratio analysis by job group, and evaluating recruitment source referrals compared to availability. Action-oriented programs are to be developed for affirmative action activities. Programs vary by institution.

## **Specific affirmative action strategies**

### **Classified Staff**

As with state general government civil service (Merit System) employment, classified hiring within higher education institutions is more regulated and rule-driven than for the other employment categories. The process for developing job announcements and job descriptions is uniform. Candidates for classified positions are considered based on their scores on uniformly applied evaluation tools, as in the Merit System.

Data presented in the 1994 GAAPCom report and data provided by institutions consistently show greater ethnic diversity in the classified category than in either the professional or faculty categories. It is important to note that the classified category includes many career "professionals" including accountants, health workers, nurses, engineers, computer specialists, and various paraprofessionals. However, some institutions cite civil service rules as a hindrance to diversity and affirmative action efforts, particularly during times of reduction in force.

### **Supplemental Certification**

A process called supplemental certification can be used to give affected group members additional consideration during referral to classified positions. Where one or more affected groups are underrepresented in a classified job category, the process allows up to three protected group members to be considered for an interview although their ranking may fall below those of the top candidates who applied. Although additional people may be "certified" for interviews through this process, hiring officials choose the person they believe is best qualified.

Current data show that the majority of classified hires made by institutions do not include any supplemental certification activity. As was the case in the Merit System, when institutions use supplemental certification, large numbers of white men and women are certified and receive additional consideration under affirmative action.

### **Civil Service Reform**

Recent civil service reforms are shifting classified positions into the exempt "professional" category, and allowing some personnel to opt out of civil service. This is seen primarily at the larger institutions. The Commission fears that such shifts could adversely affect affirmative action activities by removing the protections inherent in uni-

form recruitment and testing and by decreasing the already limited use of supplemental certification to diversify interview pools. Further research would be required to verify whether these fears are well founded.

The exempt hiring process allows greater flexibility for hiring officials in terms of how openings will be announced and which applicants may be considered. In the case of a hiring official who is committed to affirmative action practices, such flexibility could increase affected group opportunities for consideration. In the case of hiring officials who are hostile to affirmative action practices, this same measure of discretion could further limit opportunities for protected groups.

It is far too early to be certain exactly how reforms will affect affirmative action efforts. However, current applicant flow data show that hiring in the professional category is less diverse than in the classified category. Problem area reports by institutions indicate a significant degree of ignorance of affirmative action tools and goals among hiring officials. These indications of limited knowledge and affirmative action involvement among hiring officials may be contributing to weak affirmative action goal attainment across the board and particularly in professional job categories.

#### **Affected Group Profile of Higher Education Institutions' Employees/Fall 1994**

	TOTAL	DISABLED	V. VET	DIS. VET	WOMEN	BLACK	ASIAN	HISPANIC	NAT. AM.	TOTAL MIN.
University of Washington	18,762	3.0%	4.4%	0.3%	55.2%	4.51%	3.5%	2.4%	0.7%	21.1%
Washington State Univ.	4,500	5.0	5.0	0.2	46.5	1.5	4.4	1.8	1.2	9.0
Western Washington Univ.	1,469	4.8	5.6	0.7	49.1	1.4	4.2	2.1	1.6	9.3
Eastern Washington Univ.	1,043	3.1	8.1	1.1	48.2	1.7	2.1	2.6	1.7	8.1
Central Washington Univ.	991	4.8	7.0	0.4	47.9	1.0	2.3	2.8	1.5	7.7
The Evergreen State College	589	4.4	7.5	0.8	49.7	5.3	6.3	5.1	3.4	20.0
TOTAL FOUR-YEAR	27,354	3.6	4.9	0.3	52.8	3.7	10.5	2.4	0.9	17.4

*Note: these figures represent permanent monthly, paid university employees.*

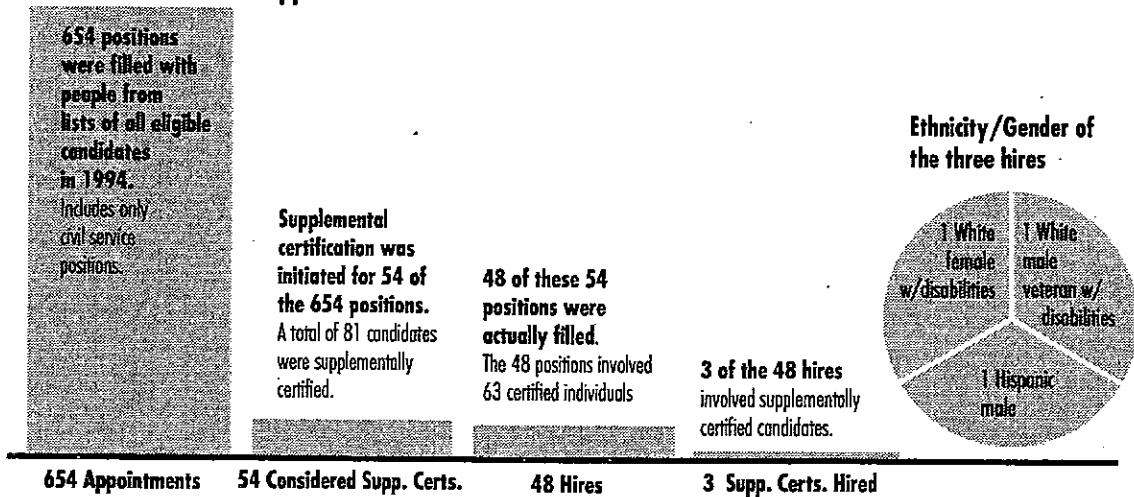
*Source: Summary of Affirmative Action Plan workforce profile reports, Department of Personnel.*

#### **Reviewing supplemental certification information**

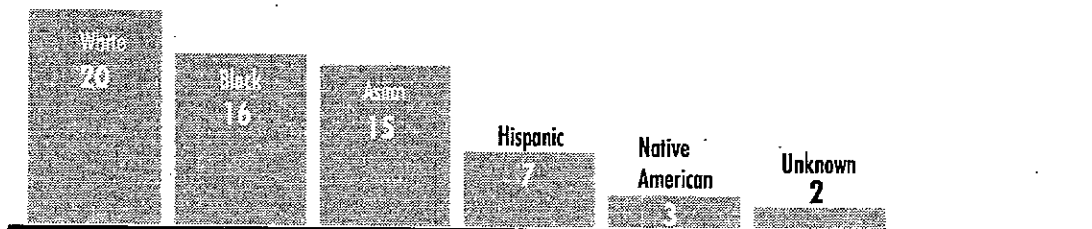
The following pages show supplemental certification data by institution. All data were provided by the respective institutions. No data were provided by the The Evergreen State College.

## 1994 Hiring/University of Washington/Classified Staff

**How many people received additional consideration under supplemental certification?**



**Distribution of the 63 affected group members receiving additional consideration through supplemental certification**

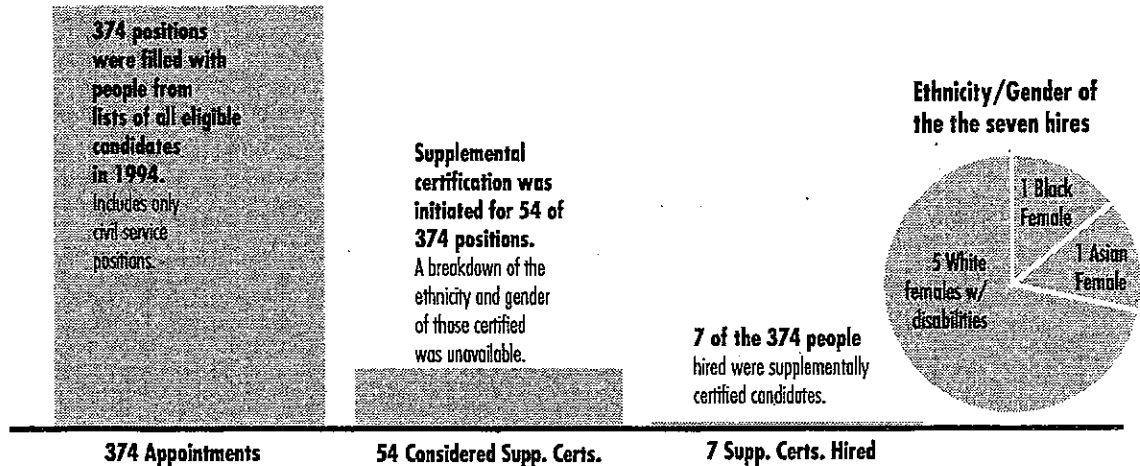


*NOTE: The above data is restricted to appointments made in 1994, from applicants of that year. Supplemental certification information only refers to "upper campus" and does not include the two hospitals that are part of the University of Washington.*

*Source: University of Washington Equal Opportunity Office*

## 1994 Hiring/Washington State University/Classified Staff

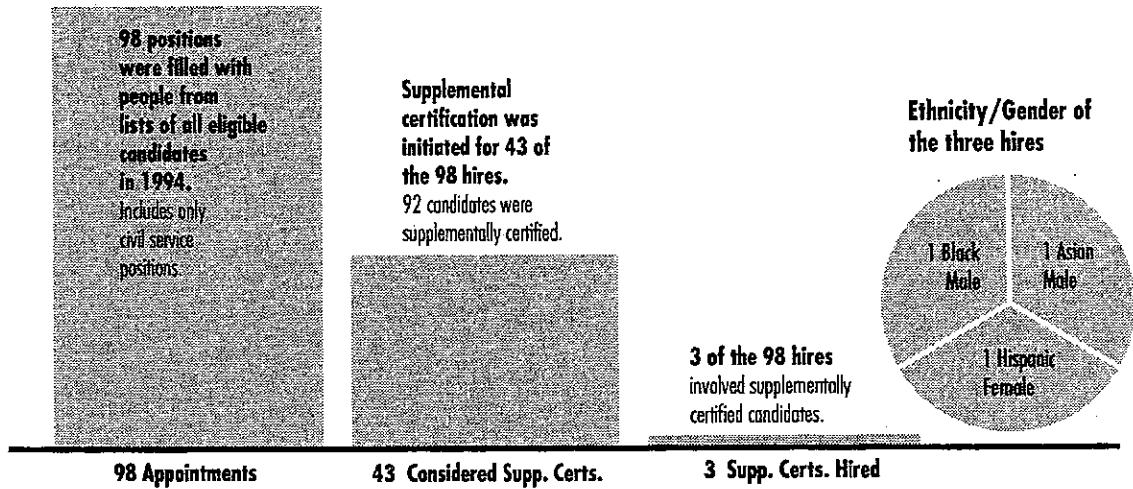
How many people received additional consideration under supplemental certification?



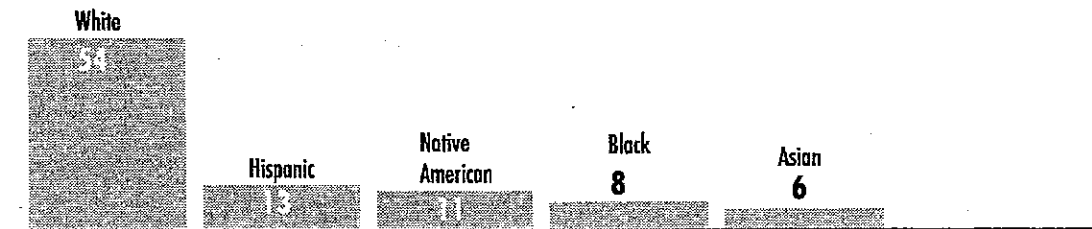
Source: Washington State University Human Resource Services

## 1994 Hiring/Western Washington University/Classified Staff

How many people received additional consideration under supplemental certification?



### Distribution of the 92 affected group members receiving additional consideration through supplemental certification

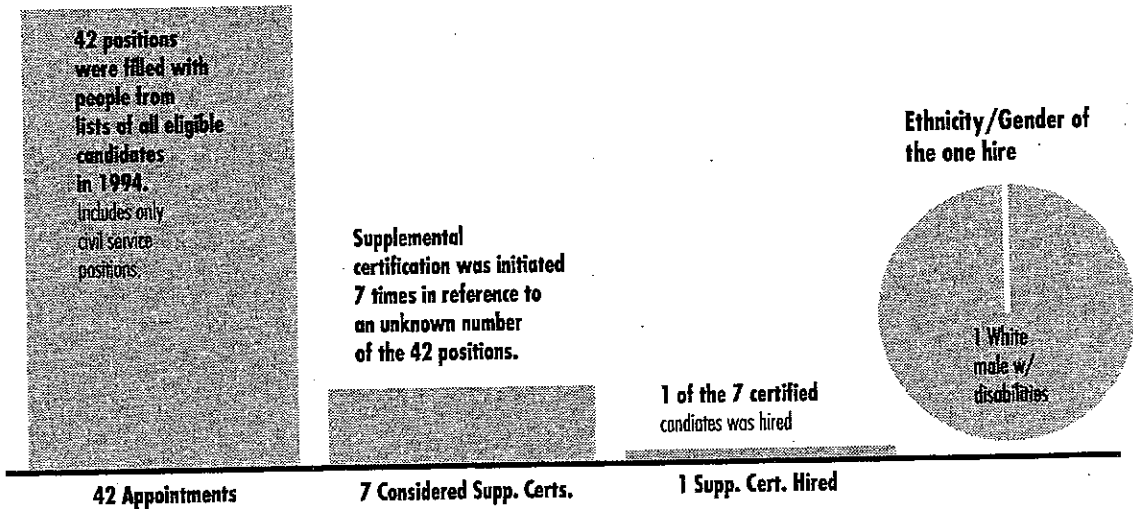


NOTE: Data on supplemental certification was unavailable on seven placements.

Source: Western Washington University Center for Equal Opportunity

## 1994 Hiring/Central Washington University/Classified Staff

How many people received additional consideration under Supplemental Certification?



Distribution of the 7 affected group members receiving additional consideration through supplemental certification

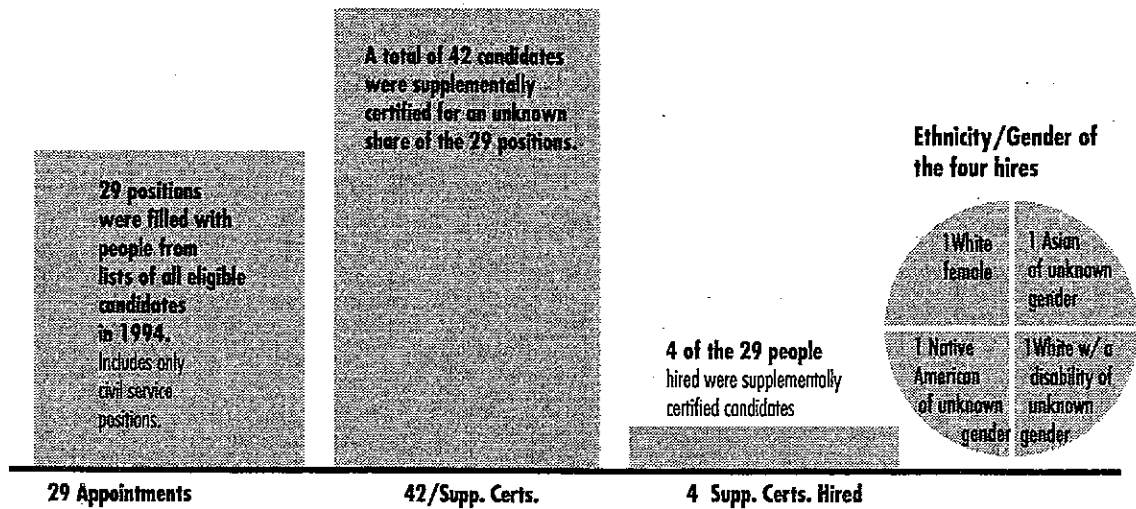


Source: Central Washington University, Office of the President



## 1994 Hiring/Eastern Washington University/Classified Staff

How many people received additional consideration under Supplemental Certification?



### Distribution of the 42 affected group members receiving additional consideration through supplemental certification



Source: Eastern Washington University Division of Human Resources and Human Rights

## How affirmative action is working for affected group members

Assessing the effectiveness of affirmative action strategies, as applied by all six four-year schools, is difficult to say the least. First of all, data are not available from all of the schools. Each school maintains data on dozens, sometimes hundreds, of individual job groups. Affirmative action goals are set at the job group level, and data on progress toward those goals (in terms of the number of applications and hires involving affected group members) also is maintained at that level. The institutions maintain large volumes of data and have worked diligently to make that data available to DOP, GAAPCom, and the Commission. However, it is challenging to assess affirmative action activities as a whole because the data is not organized into a small number of logical categories to facilitate review and evaluation.

### Applicant Flow Data

Due to the difficulties and limitations associated with reviewing affirmative action goal attainment, the Commission on African American Affairs sought assistance from the Washington State Department of Personnel (DOP) to review the data on applications and hires. This data is also known as "applicant flow" data.

DOP agreed to organize the job-group level applicant flow data provided by the institutions. The data involved were provided by each institution in their 1994 affirmative action plan documents. DOP described their methodology and the limitations of the reorganized data they provided in a memorandum. DOP's methodology was as follows:

*"The source applicant flow data was taken directly from each institution's 1994 Affirmative Action Plan. Each institution provided applicant flow analyses by job group. Job groups varied by institution depending upon the institution's workforce composition. Each institution's data was entered into a spreadsheet and then categorized and rolled up into one of three summary spreadsheets. The summary spreadsheets consisted of the following employment categories: exempt, faculty, and classified. The summary spreadsheets were then further combined and categorized into three 'system-wide' summary spreadsheets."*

DOP also secured agreements from EWU, CWU, WSU, and WWU on how certain problematic job groups could be categorized. The also institutions agreed to allow DOP to combine all faculty positions into one category. The one exception to this is the UW faculty report which does not include Librarian faculty. DOP notes that no data was provided by The Evergreen State College.

DOP also noted some limitations on use of the data. EWU and WWU did not include unidentified sex or unidentified race in their reports and other schools dropped those categories in certain analyses. According to DOP, this means that the reorganized data constitutes an *estimate* of the applicant flow by race and ethnicity.

Despite the limitations of the roll-up, the Commission on African American Affairs finds that it allows a "bird's-eye" view of applicant information. Now, instead of reviewing hundreds of job groups across institutions, we can consider information on job applicants and new hires in terms of three broad categories of employment – exempt (professional), classified, and faculty. Even this roll-up presents dozens of discrete data elements, since each of the three categories of employment include information on eight different affected groups.

**The selection rate calculations described below were performed by the Commission on African American Affairs, not DOP.** In their memorandum, DOP expressly states that they "are not responsible for the accuracy of the data beyond our gathering and compiling of the data as requested."

### **Comparing Selection Rates for Whites and Blacks**

The Commission on African American Affairs has gone one step beyond simply presenting the reorganized applicant flow data provided by DOP. The Commission has used these data to compare the RATES at which white applicants are hired to the RATES at which African Americans are hired. This comparison revealed that, in the exempt (professional) and classified job categories, whites are routinely hired at higher rates than they applied. In addition, whites were hired at higher rates than are blacks in nine of the 15 categories examined. This does not simply mean that more whites were hired than blacks – which would be expected due to the racial demographics of Washington state. It means that any one white person had better odds of being hired than any one black person. The method for calculating hire rates factors out any difference in the relative size of each racial group's representation in the applicant pool.

These findings refute allegations that affirmative action efforts are giving African Americans an unfair advantage over whites, particularly where the exempt and classified categories of employment are concerned. In fact, these findings would support the inverse argument – that affirmative action efforts at the four-year schools should be enhanced to ensure that equal employment opportunities exist for black people, particularly in the exempt and classified areas.

In the faculty category, African Americans were hired at higher rates than whites at all five institutions. However, in three of the five instances where this occurred, only one African American hire comprised the entire pool of hires used to calculate the hire rate. In 1994, a total of 10 black faculty were hired at the five schools for which applicant flow data were available (all of the four-year schools, except The Evergreen State College).

### **Understanding the Selection Rates and "Adverse Impact" Calculation**

Minimal differences in hire rates may be the result of chance. When is it reasonable to view different selection rates as possible indicators of discrimination? The 1995 Office of Federal Contracts and Compliance Program manual states that "adverse impact" on a group of job applicants is indicated when the "selection rate for one group is less than 80% of that for another." A finding of "adverse impact" is the first step in establishing

that equal employment opportunity MAY NOT exist in a particular environment. Each of the four-year schools is required by federal contracting rules to collect applicant flow data. They also are required to evaluate their hiring record and identify problem areas. The adverse impact calculation is a frequently used tool for problem identification.

The adverse impact calculation should be applied to data collected at the job group level. The data used by the Commission to compare selection rates is a composite of job group data, therefore it would be statistically inaccurate to conduct an adverse impact analysis on these figures. However, the Governor's Affirmative Action Policy Committee has instructed some of the public four-year institutions to conduct selected adverse impact analyses and to present their findings in next year's affirmative action plan documents.

#### **Example of the Adverse Impact Calculation**

Example: 100 whites apply for positions in a certain job group and 10 are hired, resulting a selection rate of 10 percent (10 hires divided by 100 applicants = 0.1 or a 10% percent selection rate.) 30 blacks apply for positions in the same job group and 2 are hired, resulting in a selection rate of 6 percent (2 hires divided by 30 applicants = 0.06 or a 6% selection rate. To determine adverse impact, the two selection rates are compared to each other (adverse impact calculation — .06 divided by .1 = .6 or 60%). This final calculation reveals that the selection rate for blacks is only 60 percent of the selection rate for whites. When the selection rate for minorities is less than 80 percent of the rate for whites, adverse impact may exist.

## Comparison of Selection Rates for Whites and African Americans

### University of Washington

#### Exempt Hiring Roll-up

	# Applied	% of all Applicants	# Hired	% of all Hires
White	10,043	55.1%	451	83.80%
Black	601	3.3%	16	2.97%

#### Comparison of Hire Rates

% of White Applicants Hired	% of Black Applicants Hired
4.49%	2.66%

Selection rate for Blacks is 59% of the selection rate for Whites

#### Classified Hiring Roll-up

	# Applied	% of all Applicants	# Hired	% of all Hires
White	4,901	60.22%	513	71.45%
Black	819	10.06%	56	7.8%

#### Comparison of Hire Rates

% of White Applicants Hired	% of Black Applicants Hired
10.4%	6.83%

Selection rate for Blacks is 65.6% of the selection rate for Whites

#### Faculty Hiring Roll-up\*

	# Applied	% of all Applicants	# Hired	% of all Hires
White	5,114	81.1%	140	84.34%
Black	100	1.59%	4	2.41%

#### Comparison of Hire Rates

% of White Applicants Hired	% of Black Applicants Hired
2.73%	4.0%

Selection rate for Blacks is 146% of the selection rate for Whites

\* Includes ladder and research faculty, unidentified sex/race data not reported.

#### Key

 Selection rate for whites is higher than for blacks

 Selection rate for blacks is higher than for whites

Source: Applicant Flow, Institutional 1994 Affirmative Action Plan Data as compiled by Department of Personnel

Source: Selection Rate Comparison, Washington State Commission on African American Affairs

## Comparison of Selection Rates for Whites and African Americans

### Washington State University

#### Exempt Hiring Roll-up\*

	# Applied	% of all Applicants	# Hired	% of all Hires
White	2,169	97.83%	41	97.62
Black	13	0.59%	0	0

#### Comparison of Hire Rates

% of White Applicants Hired	% of Black Applicants Hired
1.89	0

Selection rate for Blacks is 0% of the selection rate for Whites

#### Classified Hiring Roll-up\*

	# Applied	% of all Applicants	# Hired	% of all Hires
White	3,009	82.98%	166	84.26%
Black	53	1.46	4	2.03%

#### Comparison of Hire Rates

% of White Applicants Hired	% of Black Applicants Hired
5.51%	7.54%

Selection rate for Blacks is 136.8% of the selection rate for Whites

#### Faculty Hiring Roll-up\*

	# Applied	% of all Applicants	# Hired	% of all Hires
White	1,704	84.90%	46	90.2%
Black	20	1.0%	1	1.96%

#### Comparison of Hire Rates

% of White Applicants Hired	% of Black Applicants Hired
2.69%	5.0%

Selection rate for Blacks is 185% of the selection rate for Whites

#### Key

 Selection rate for whites is higher than for blacks

 Selection rate for blacks is higher than for whites

Source: Applicant Flow, Institutional 1994 Affirmative Action Plan Data as compiled by Department of Personnel

Source: Selection Rate Comparison, Washington State Commission on African American Affairs

\* WSU reported 288 applicants and 10 hires of unidentified race. WSU does not analyze personnel actions by classified and exempt job groups. As a result, the data presented above reflects an estimate of the applicant flow.

• Data reflects a combination of instructional and research faculty positions.

## Comparison of Selection Rates for Whites and African Americans

### Western Washington University

#### Exempt Hiring Roll-up\*

	# Applied	% of all Applicants	# Hired	% of all Hires
White	1,318	66.20%	45	83.33%
Black	67	3.37%	2	3.70%

#### Comparison of Hire Rates

% of White Applicants Hired	% of Black Applicants Hired
3.41%	2.98%

Selection rate for Blacks is 87% of the selection rate for Whites

#### Classified Hiring Roll-up\*

	# Applied	% of all Applicants	# Hired	% of all Hires
White	1,062	81.01%	56	91.80%
Black	38	2.90%	1	1.64%

#### Comparison of Hire Rates

% of White Applicants Hired	% of Black Applicants Hired
5.27%	2.63%

Selection rate for Blacks is 44.9% of the selection rate for Whites

#### Faculty Hiring Roll-up\*

	# Applied	% of all Applicants	# Hired	% of all Hires
White	742	57.70%	20	86.96%
Black	11	0.86%	1	4.35%

#### Comparison of Hire Rates

% of White Applicants Hired	% of Black Applicants Hired
2.60%	9.0%

Selection rate for Blacks is 346% of the selection rate for Whites

#### Key

 Selection rate for whites is higher than for blacks

 Selection rate for blacks is higher than for whites

Source: Applicant Flow, Institutional 1994 Affirmative Action Plan Data as compiled by Department of Personnel

Source: Selection Rate Comparison, Washington State Commission on African American Affairs

\* WWU does not analyze personnel actions by classified and exempt job groups.

As a result, the data presented above reflects an estimate of the applicant flow.

• Data reflects a combination of tenured and tenure-track faculty, and nontenure-track faculty positions.

## Comparison of Selection Rates for Whites and African Americans

### Central Washington University

#### Exempt Hiring Roll-up\*

	# Applied	% of all Applicants	# Hired	% of all Hires
White	394	58.54%	22	100.0%
Black	6	0.89%	0	0%

#### Comparison of Hire Rates

% of White Applicants Hired	% of Black Applicants Hired
5.58%	0%

Selection rate for Blacks is 0% of the selection rate for Whites

#### Classified Hiring Roll-up\*

	# Applied	% of all Applicants	# Hired	% of all Hires
White	968	83.23%	34	91.89%
Black	2	0.17%	0	0%

#### Comparison of Hire Rates

% of White Applicants Hired	% of Black Applicants Hired
3.51%	0%

Selection rate for Blacks is 0% of the selection rate for Whites

#### Faculty Hiring Roll-up\*

	# Applied	% of all Applicants	# Hired	% of all Hires
White	605	50.17%	24	82.76%
Black	11	0.86%	1	4.35%

#### Comparison of Hire Rates

% of White Applicants Hired	% of Black Applicants Hired
3.96%	7.69%

Selection rate for Blacks is 194% of the selection rate for Whites

#### Key

 Selection rate for whites is higher than for blacks

 Selection rate for blacks is higher than for whites

Source: Applicant Flow, Institutional 1994 Affirmative Action Plan Data as compiled by Department of Personnel

Source: Selection Rate Comparison, Washington State Commission on African American Affairs

\* CWU does not analyze personnel actions by classified and exempt job groups.

As a result, the data presented above reflects an estimate of the applicant flow.

• Data reflects a combination of tenured and non-tenured faculty positions.



## Comparison of Selection Rates for Whites and African Americans

### Eastern Washington University

#### Exempt Hiring Roll-up\*

	# Applied	% of all Applicants	# Hired	% of all Hires
White	824	94.39%	18	85.71%
Black	11	1.26%	0	0%

#### Comparison of Hire Rates

% of White Applicants Hired	% of Black Applicants Hired
2.18%	0%
Selection rate for Blacks is 0% of the selection rate for Whites	

#### Classified Hiring Roll-up\*

	# Applied	% of all Applicants	# Hired	% of all Hires
White	275	85.94%	19	86.36%
Black	8	2.50%	0	0%

#### Comparison of Hire Rates

% of White Applicants Hired	% of Black Applicants Hired
6.90%	0%
Selection rate for Blacks is 0% of the selection rate for Whites	

#### Faculty Hiring Roll-up\*

	# Applied	% of all Applicants	# Hired	% of all Hires
White	920	92.00%	36	83.72%
Black	17	1.70%	3	6.98%

#### Comparison of Hire Rates

% of White Applicants Hired	% of Black Applicants Hired
3.91%	17.6%
Selection rate for Blacks is 450% of the selection rate for Whites	

#### Key

 Selection rate for whites is higher than for blacks

 Selection rate for blacks is higher than for whites

Source: Applicant Flow, Institutional 1994 Affirmative Action Plan Data as compiled by Department of Personnel

Source: Selection Rate Comparison, Washington State Commission on African American Affairs

\* EWU does not analyze personnel actions by classified and exempt job groups.

As a result, the data presented above reflects an estimate of the applicant flow.

• Data reflects a combination of tenure track, non-tenure track, and research faculty positions.

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***Commission on African American Affairs White Paper***  
**Affirmative Action and Higher Education Admissions**

Through the 1970 and '80s, various public and private institutions of higher education launched affirmative action efforts for student admissions. Meanwhile court rulings encouraged desegregation of public higher education nationwide. In 1970, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund sued the U.S. Department of Health Education, and Welfare, charging that it had failed to order the desegregation of public colleges in 10 Southern and border states. In 1978, the Supreme Court ruled in the *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* that colleges may use race as a factor in admissions decisions, but may not set aside a specific proportion of their entering classes for minority students. The decision precluded the establishment of enrollment "quotas" based on race.

In keeping with the restrictions of the *Bakke* decision, Washington state's higher education system is devoid of any policies or programs that establish racial quotas for student enrollment. However, statewide policy does exist which was originally contemplated as an affirmative action tool to encourage increased enrollment of students of color. That policy is the HECB alternative admissions policy for the four-year public institutions of higher education.

As was the case with affirmative action in state merit-system employment, affirmative action efforts related to student admissions (HECB alternative admissions policy) have largely benefited whites in Washington State. Yet, some opponents of affirmative action have asserted that affirmative action is allowing minorities, and particularly African Americans, to gain an unfair advantage over "better-qualified" whites. Regardless of who is benefiting, a review of the facts indicates that tinkering with affirmative action policy probably would not provide any relief to those who cannot gain admission to a public four-year school in Washington.

Access to Washington's four-year public institutions is capped by the state legislature. Demand for enrollment slots has almost always outstripped availability. This is particularly true when demand for post-graduate slots is considered in isolation.

In a July 27, 1995 memorandum to the Commission on African American Affairs, the Washington State House of Representatives' Office of Program Research reported statistical estimates of the "waiting line" of prospective students who could not gain admission to the state's four-year schools. A total of 2,271 students were in the "waiting line after follow-up," according to table 6.5 of the memo. More than 44 percent of those in the statewide waiting line were seeking to do post-baccalaureate studies at the University of Washington. When all of the public four-year schools are considered, more than half of the waiting line consists of prospective post-baccalaureate students.

The Commission on African American affairs believes that much of the pent up demand for graduate admissions is attributable to extremely low odds of success for all students applying for graduate admissions. Many graduate programs offer a small number of admissions slots to an ever-growing number of well-qualified applicants. The University of Washington Law School, for example, admits fewer than 165 students each year -- the same as 30 years ago -- even though state population has doubled in that time and the number of applicants to the school annually has tripled (700 to 2,500).

University of Washington Law School Dean Wallace D. Loh wrote a special editorial which appeared in the March 12, 1995 Seattle Times. (The data above on admissions and applications came from that editorial.) In that editorial, Loh spoke directly to what he called the "myth of racial displacement" which fuels much of the debate over affirmative action in higher education. "There is a prevailing impression among some disappointed applicants that they would not have been rejected but for the admission of 'less qualified' minorities, said Loh. "The fact is that even if zero minorities were admitted, most qualified applicants would still be turned down. This is because the UW Law school is one of the smallest public law schools in the country."

If there are victims of "reverse discrimination" due to affirmative action efforts surrounding admissions, those victims would be in the waiting line. A review of the distribution of the "waiting line" -- and the associated pressure at the graduate level -- would allow a better understanding of the factors influence access to higher education in Washington. Unfortunately, the House of Representatives memo did not present any demographic information about people in the waiting line -- such data may be unavailable.

But, we do know that more than half of those in the waiting line already have baccalaureate degrees. Second, we know that the remaining hopefuls -- 1,155 for the 1992-93 academic year -- represent far less than one percent of the annual average headcount enrollment at all the public four-year schools combined. This means that where access to baccalaureate education is concerned, only a relatively tiny share of individuals seeking admission statewide are unsuccessful.

Furthermore, a significant number of those in the waiting line are likely to be women and people of color, thereby reducing the number of white males in the waiting line who could claim to be victims of reverse discrimination in admissions. Lastly, we know that those undergraduate applicants who were denied admission actually were competing with large numbers of whites who gain admission under alternative admission standards. They also are competing with an unknown number of students who receive other types of admissions preferences, including preferences for children of alumni (legacies), athletes, and artists. Beneficiaries of these preferences are not always counted by institutions among their alternative admissions students.

Available data indicate that the undergraduate participation of people of color is declining at the state's public four-year institutions. The Higher Education Coordinating Board released a report this month (November 1995) that presents undergraduate participation rates by race.<sup>1</sup> Participation rates at the four-year institutions were lower in 1994 than in 1990 for African Americans (1.65 in 1990 and 1.51 in 1994 ) and Asians (3.84 in 1990 and 3.49 in 1994). Rates for Native Americans and Hispanics are higher for 1994 than 1990. African Americans and Hispanics are still participating at rates below that for the state as a whole. Participation rates were not provided expressly for whites, but the total statewide participation rate is down from 1.83 in 1990 to 1.71 in 1994. The HECB report attributes the decline in the statewide participation rate to "the decline in the statewide public institutional capacity" and/or demographic shifts which influence calculation of the rate.

Aside from limited capacity at public institutions, all students are feeling the squeeze on student aid funds. Federal funding for student aid has dropped precipitously in recent years. The funds now available are more often in the form of loans, as opposed to grants.

According to Dana Y. Takagi, associate professor of sociology at the University of California at Santa Cruz, "Access to higher education for working-class students has become more limited in recent years, partly as a result of more stringent federal criteria for determining who is 'financially independent' – and thus eligible for more aid – than students who are dependent on their families can receive." Takagi continues, "Such restrictions have hurt low-income students who receive no financial support from their families, thus limiting, not expanding, their educational opportunities."

It may well be that limited capacity at the four-year schools – and constraints on federal student aid – are prompting a search for solutions to a very real decline in educational access. In the frenzied search for answers, affirmative action has been a convenient target. However, even if affirmative action was eliminated tomorrow, enrollment caps would still exist, federal funds would still be tight, and access to higher education would be largely unchanged for people who find themselves in the higher education waiting line.

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<sup>1</sup> Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board, 1995 Statewide Progress Report on Participation by People of Color and Diversity, November 1995, page 5, Table 4.

The Washington State Commission on African American Affairs, was created by Executive Order in 1989 and established in statute in 1992. Mandated by the legislature, the Commission's functions are to improve public policy development for, and government service delivery to the African American community by; (1) examining and defining issues pertaining to the rights and needs of the African American Community; (2) making recommendations to the Governor and state agencies for changes in programs and laws; (3) advising on the development of relevant policies, plans and programs; (4) advising the legislature on issues of concern to the African American Community; and (5) establishing relationships with state agencies, local governments, and the private sector. The mission of the Commission on African American Affairs is to develop and promote public policy which enhances the social, economic, political, and educational health and welfare of African American people in Washington State.

The Commission consists of nine members appointed by the Governor:

T.J. Vassar, Chair, Seattle

Tony Hudson, Tacoma

Thelma Jackson, Vice Chair, Olympia

Norman Moorer, Tri-Cities

Henry Beauchamp, Yakima

Leroy J. Williams, Bremerton

Shaunna Weatherby, Tacoma

Joanne R. Harrell, Seattle

Jennifer Roseman, Spokane

Commission staff are James Kelly, Executive Director and Pamela Morris, Confidential Secretary.

During the legislative session the Commission convened an affirmative action think tank to advise the Commission on the development of this report. Think tank members are:

Professor Thaddeus Spratlan, U.W. School of Business

Professor Hubert Locke, U. W. Graduate School of Public Affairs

Professor Al Black, U.W. Sociology Department

Jim Medina, Director, Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprise

David Della, Director, Commission on Asian Affairs

John Little, Washington State Human Rights Commission

Bob Flowers, Vice President, Washington Mutual Bank

Herman McKinney, Seattle Chamber of Commerce

Constance Proctor, attorney-at-law

Constance Herring, NAACP

Dr. Carver Gayton, The Boeing Company

Barbara Moore, student intern

Germaine Covington, Seattle Human Rights Commission

Cedric D. Page, Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board

Manny Lee, King County Office of Civil Rights

Vivian Caver, community activist

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